

Woody Varner, who was president of the university from 1970-77, during Nebraska's first two national championships, said he knew Devaney when he was an assistant coach at Michigan State.

"He came (here) with real devotion to Nebraska," Varner said.

"He was always a fighter for Nebraska. He never swallowed the story that Nebraska was second-class in any respect. He wanted Nebraskans to feel proud of themselves and of the state."

Varner added that what Devaney did for athletics helped build the reputation of the university.

"It was easier to recruit students and faculty," he said. "The state of Nebraska held its head high, thanks to Bob Devaney."

Don Bryant, UNL associate athletic director and former longtime sports information director, said, "I have lost a dear, personal friend and it results in a feeling of numbness and shock to realize that Bob Devaney no longer is a force in Nebraska and intercollegiate athletics."

Bryant said Devaney's coaching ability and administrative leadership "raised the standards of excellence and the visions of highest expectations for all Nebraskans."

Osborne said that besides being a great coach, Devaney was "a great friend."

"He was the one who gave me a chance to be a graduate assistant, an assistant coach and a head coach at Nebraska," Osborne said. "Most everything I know about coaching I learned from him. He was exceptional at handling players, always had a great sense of humor, and the players enjoyed playing for him because of the type of person he was. We will all miss him dearly."

UNL Athletic Director Bill Byrne described Devaney as "a giant in the world of college football, a dear friend and national leader." Devaney's leadership "created a football dynasty and athletic program that is the best in America," he said. "Our goal at Nebraska will be to continue the legacy created by Bob. We all will miss him very much."

UNL sports historian Ben Rader described Devaney as "a modern icon of success, in as much as his victories represented success for the entire state . . . He was also an example of a self-made man, who came from modest origins. Success is very difficult to measure in the world of bureaucracies, but an athletics or sports, it's very clear-cut."

UNL volleyball coach Terry Pettit recalled that when Devaney came to Nebraska, he had two missions.

"First, he turned around an average football program and made it into the best in the nation. Then, as athletic director, he (took) a mediocre athletic department and built it into one of the best all-around athletic programs in the country."

Pettit credited Devaney with helping make Nebraska competitive in women's athletics.

"He gave me the resources and opportunity to succeed," Pettit said.

"He did have, and he will continue to have a lasting impact on the Nebraska athletic department and the entire state of Nebraska. His energy, enthusiasm and drive shaped our athletic department. For a lot of people, especially the coaches under him, he was a sort of father figure. We looked to him for guidance and support, and he always showed great loyalty to his staff."

[From the Omaha World Herald, May 11, 1997]

BOB DEVANEY, BUILDER OF PRIDE

Bob Devaney.

The name unleashes a flood of symbols and memories.

Johnnie the Jet.

Gotham Bowl.

The Game of the Century.

Tagge-Brownson.

Back-to-back national football championships.

Tom Osborne.

Expansion after expansion of Memorial Stadium.

A sea of helium-filled red balloons, released by thousands of football fans on Nebraska's first touchdown of the game, hanging in the air above Lincoln on a brilliant fall day.

Even before Devaney's death on Friday, it has been an often-repeated cliché that Devaney's impact on Nebraska went far beyond football, that he brought Nebraskans together, east and west.

But like most other clichés, this one is backed by solid evidence.

A stumbling athletic program wasn't the only negative that greeted Devaney when he accepted the head coaching job in 1962. The state's spirit in general had been bruised by events of the previous five years. The Starkweather mass murders were still fresh in people's memories. A governor had recently died in office. Angry debates over tax policy and school financing, gathering steam since the 1940s, were dividing urban and rural Nebraska interests.

Nebraskans were ready for a little good news. Devaney gave it to them.

Under him, the Cornhuskers played with noticeably greater verve.

They won games that they would have lost in earlier years.

They began appearing in the national ratings. Then the Top 10.

Finally, in 1970 and 1971, they were national champions.

Interstate 80 was pushing westward across Nebraska in those days.

Westerners sometimes asked what good it was.

Devaney's success gave people in Hyannis, Kimball and Scottsbluff a reason to use the new superhighway.

Cowboy boots and Stetsons, often bright red, became a familiar sight in Lincoln on autumn Saturdays.

Lincoln's economy benefited.

East-west friendships grew stronger. The financial success of the football team made it possible for Nebraska to have a high-caliber women's athletic program. The classy Devaney football teams gave the university national visibility.

Some people say that too much is made of college athletics, and they're right. Devaney knew that. Remember, he told fans before a game in 1965, there are 800 million people in China "who don't give a damn whether Nebraska wins or loses." There are bigger things in life than whether the team wins.

Devaney never seemed driven or angry. He respected his opponents. His spirit of good sportsmanship lives on in the Memorial Stadium fans who traditionally applaud Nebraska's opponents at the end of each game, even when Nebraska loses.

Devaney never set out to transform Nebraska. He would have laughed if someone in 1962 said he was responsible for propping up the self-esteem of an entire state. He was just a man with something he could do very, very well. But excellence on the football field inspired excellence in other walks of life.

Devaney's success, and the positive influence his accomplishments had on his adopted state, constitutes a memorial that will long bring honor to his name.●

WEI JINGSHENG

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleagues who have so elo-

quently praised China's most prominent dissident and advocate of democracy, Wei Jingsheng, and who have called for his immediate release from prison. Yesterday marked the publication of Mr. Wei's remarkable book, "The Courage to Stand Alone." The book is a compilation of his valiant prison letters to the Chinese leadership.

As a result of Mr. Wei's outspoken and articulate views on human rights and democracy the Government of China has imprisoned him—mostly in solitary confinement—for the greatest part of two decades. His personal sacrifices in the name of fundamental freedoms are a testament to his heroic spirit.

As one who has always supported commercial engagement with Beijing to encourage greater openness and freedom in China, I find China's repression of Wei's views and cruel treatment of Wei himself offensive.

As we are about to embark on our annual debate on renewing normal trade relations with China, Beijing must realize that its treatment of Mr. Wei in particular, and its repressive human rights policies in general, trouble all of the Members of this body, especially those of us who favor renewal.

While Mr. Wei has been outspoken in his own support of continuing China's MFN trade status—noting at his trial that the direct victims of MFN revocation "would be the already poverty-stricken Chinese people" rather than the authorities in Beijing—China would do its people and its position in the world well by heeding this brave man's calls for greater freedom and democracy.●

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT ACT

● Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, it is a privilege to cosponsor the Early Childhood Development Act and I commend Senator KERRY for introducing this important legislation.

Recent research has clearly demonstrated what parents and others have intuitively known for generations: that experiences in the early childhood years lay the foundation for much of later development. Children thrive and grow on positive interactions with their parents and other adults. Quality child care, quality nutrition, and quality health care can make all the difference in enabling infants and children to reach their full potential and become contributing members of society. Ensuring that children have these experiences early in development is much easier and less expensive than coping with later crisis problems such as substance abuse, school dropout, and criminal behavior.

The Early Childhood Development Act is a significant step toward helping children obtain the multiple supports they need to grow and thrive. It builds effectively on the White House summit in April that emphasized the very great